

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 MANAMA 01632 170418Z
ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 H-02 /019 W
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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6424
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UNCLAS MANAMA 1632

FOR H AND SCS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CDES, BA, QA
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY: DISPOSITION OF REMAINS OF
JOHN VARJABEDIAN

1. AMBASSADOR HAS RECEIVED AN INQUIRY FROM REPR. WILLIAM BRODHEAD ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF EXHUMING THE REMAINS OF JOHN VARJABEDIAN, AN AMERICAN CITIZEN WHO DIED IN QATAR ON MAY 20, 1978. MR. VARJABEDIAN'S REMAINS WERE SHIPPED TO MANAMA FOR CREMATION WHICH PROVED IMPOSSIBLE THROUGH A MALFUNCTIONING OF CREMATORIUM. PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITIES IN BAHRAIN INSISTED THAT THE BODY BE BURIED IMMEDIATELY. THE REMAINS WERE INTERRED IN THE CHRISTIAN CEMETERY IN BAHRAIN AND THE WIDOW, MRS. JOHN VARJABEDIAN, WAS INFORMED OF THE UNAVOIDABLE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO OUR INABILITY TO COMPLY WITH HER WISHES.

2. PLEASE PASS FOLLOWING TO REPR. WILLIAM BRODHEAD, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: IN RESPONSE TO YOUR INQUIRY ABOUT THE BURIAL OF MR. JOHN VARJABEDIAN AND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR EXHUMATION OF THESE REMAINS IN BAHRAIN, THE EMBASSY CONTACTED THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH WHO INFORMED US THAT WHILE NO CURRENT LAWS EXIST IN RESPECT TO EXHUMATION, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH IS GUIDED IN SUCH
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MATTERS BY AN EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES OF THE FORMER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION WHICH ESTABLISHED A STATUTORY PERIOD OF TEN YEARS AFTER THE BURIAL DURING WHICH EXHUMATION MAY NOT TAKE PLACE. GGF THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT A WAIVER OF THIS WAITING PERIOD WERE APPROVED, HEALTH OFFICIALS WOULD HAVE TO BE BROUGHT INTO BAHRAIN FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM TO PERFORM THE

EXHUMATION AND PREPARE THE REMAINS FOR AIR SHIPMENT AS
THERE ARE NO SUCH SPECIALISTS IN THE BAHRAIN MINISTRY OF
HEALTH AND INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING REQUIREMENTS ARE VERY
STRINGENT.

PLEASE CONVEY AGAIN TO MRS. VARJABEDIAN OUR SINCERE
SORROW AT NOT BEING ABLE TO DISPOSE OF HER HUSBAND'S REMAINS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH HER EXPRESSED WISHES.
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Message Attributes

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